

'Just Doing Our Job': Theories and Manifestations of Oppression

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Abstract: In a companion paper written prior to this piece, Anarchist Theory and its origins and effects on the Occupy Wall Street movement were critically analyzed. Anarchy, or 'without hierarchy', is the decentralization of decision making and freedom given to the individual or community to govern themselves as they see fit, long as they do no harm. It is a philosophy rooted in organization, contrary to its reputation for chaos. The paper continued: "An anarchist society is essentially a case-by-case basis, created as its members see fit. A consensus based organization of people under the basis of freedom and liberty for all is the foundational principle in anarchist theory and practice in most all research."¹ Although it is touted as a philosophy of freedom, it is also noted that Anarchist Theory is elitist in its accordance of origin credit. Anarchy is a living thing, an action of the people, but the popular opinion is in its ivory tower origination with great white thinkers who abhorred tyranny, but were doing nothing for the truly oppressed People of Color. Anarchy's refusal to critically examine this flaw in its logic causes it to reinforce the hierarchies it seeks to dismantle, allowing for law enforcement, at the command of the power elites, to break up its already fragmented movements.

One of the most recent manifestations of this is the Occupy Wall Street movement. Planned mostly by anarchists who had been a part of other social movements going on at the time worldwide, they set up camp in Zuccotti Park/Liberty Plaza September 17, 2011, only to be bulldozed out and otherwise evicted after rapidly spreading on the, as the aforementioned paper states: “November 15th raid and unlawful eviction by police in a coordinated effort with mayors of multiple cities nationwide in conjunction with Homeland Security.”² This movement brought the idea of inequality to the forefront of American public discussion, and went worldwide prior to its State- sanctioned demise. It was noted that: “Much like anarchy, Occupy Wall Street’s biggest issue was and is with the politics of inclusion, particularly with addressing racism. If those within the movement are not applying the same critiques to themselves as they are society, they are not actively dismantling oppressive hierarchical structures, they are reinforcing them with their unwillingness to check their own privilege.”³

One of the key points of the first paper, with which it ends, and this one begins, is this:

“This of course is not to say that the State did not also have a direct role in the dismantling of OWS and the historical demonization and suppression of anarchism as a whole. Kropotkin, Guérin, and other anarchists have observed throughout history that the function of the State is mainly self preservation, and that it will go to great lengths to maintain and expand its legacy. The actions of the police in response to Occupy camps and subsequent laws passed by the State in the wake of the movement suppressing protest and censoring the internet (to name a couple) are evidence of that. Almost all of the research published on Occupy Wall Street includes sections on police brutality and a blatant disregard for the First Amendment rights of protesters and occupiers. The only difference this time is the rate at which the police brutality galvanized and radicalized individuals who finally saw what it was like to deal with State violence firsthand. The State has a way of gaining power from social movements, having the ability to further centralize and oppress based on its lessons learned from anarchists’ direct action; assuming people are able to see through the stigma and shaming in the first place in order to stand for what is right... The upcoming companion paper to this piece will explore the State’s role in more detail, as well as how it actively works to silence and suppress dissent in law, culture, and society. It will look at how the hierarchies that anarchist practice seeks to destroy are created and maintained, and how this insidious indoctrination affects would-be anarchist revolutionary movements such as OWS.”⁴

This paper will not only do that, it will show the true extent to which the system is bought and paid for, and the extent to which their owners, the corporate elite, use a hierarchical yet intersectional approach to keeping their power and protecting their interests. Starting with the patriarchy and power elite, it will examine their formation and how they use their networks to create and maintain a status quo at their whim, and to the detriment of the people. It is the maintenance of these systems of oppression that will be given particular consideration, as they have the most effect on the suppression of individual freedom and autonomous movements such as OWS. It will start with the physical manifestations of oppression, such as surveillance and confinement. It is in discussing the particular population that is most likely to be watched and confined that will lead into an analysis of the psychological, sociological, and cultural methods those in power use to protect their interests, as well as trick the public into thinking it has its best interest at heart, and so there is no need to organize; while disenfranchising the silent majority from realizing their true power to affect change. The overall idea is to expose these methods and

the façade behind the construct and to offer constructive methods of tearing it down, in hopes that those who are made aware of this no longer fear taking action.

Patriarchy, the Media, and the Power Elite: Formation and Acceptance of Oppression

Author and feminist activist bell hooks (2004) defines patriarchy as:

“...a major facet of the political system that shapes and informs male identity and sense of self from birth until death. I often use the phrase ‘imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy’ to describe the interlocking political systems that are the foundation of our nation’s politics...Patriarchy is a political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak...and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak, and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence.” (17-18).

hooks points out that this indoctrination is started at a young age, with gender roles. Males are socialized that violence is the only proper expression of emotion, whereas females are discouraged from expressions of violence and anger. She recounts a childhood memory of being beaten by her father for playing marbles, deemed ‘a boy’s game.’ She states this story was repeated often after the fact, to serve as a reminder of her place. She notes that “the retelling was necessary to reinforce both the message and the remembered state of absolute powerlessness...This is the way we were experientially schooled in the art of patriarchy.” (21). She points out that most all people have a similar memory growing up, “with the same underlying theme, the use of violence to reinforce our indoctrination and acceptance of patriarchy.” (21). She also discusses the use of ‘the gaze’ in the reinforcement of patriarchy, something that Foucault also analyzes and will be discussed later on. Along with this psychological patriarchy, blind obedience and the rule of silence are used to keep the patriarchal order (23-25).

hooks also addresses the interlocking of manhood and labor that patriarchy creates. Being a capitalist based construct, the patriarchy relies on the labor of others, namely the aforementioned ‘weak’, in order to sustain itself. hooks writes: “Masses of men believe that their ability to provide for themselves and families is a measure of their manhood.” (93). She points out several examples of how this idea is perpetuated in popular culture (often a source for patriarchal indoctrination), noting: “They echo the patriarchal message that if a man stops work, he loses his reason for living.” (101). But, alas, who is this ubiquitous ‘they’? The answer to that are the power elite.

C. Wright Mills (1956) defined the power elite as “composed of men and women whose positions enable them to transcend the ordinary environments of ordinary men and women; they are in positions to make decisions having major consequences...For they are in command of the major hierarchies and organizations of modern society” (3-4). He observed: “Within American society, major national power now resides in the economic, the political, and the military domains...Moreover, one feature of these hierarchies of corporation, state, and military establishment is that their top positions are increasingly interchangeable.” (6, 10). This has become increasingly evident today, with CEOs being appointed to cabinet positions, and military and government officials going onto accept corporate positions. As has held true since Mills’ observations, “the people of these higher circles are involved in a set of overlapping ‘crowds’

and intricately connected 'cliques'...there is an interchangeability of position between the various hierarchies of money and power and celebrity." (11-12). Nowhere is this more evident than in our current presidential race. There are also several examples of celebrities-turned-mayors, governors, or senators. The points that Mills makes in these opening pages of this work have only gone on to be centralized and reinforced as time has gone on. He also writes that: "The professional celebrity...is the crowning result of a star system of a society that makes a fetish of competition" (74), a hallmark of the advancement of patriarchy. Furthermore: "To make the corporation self-perpetuating, the chief executives feel that they must perpetuate themselves, or men like themselves—men not only trained, but also indoctrinated." (139). This bears repeating: *not only trained, but also indoctrinated*. If the patriarchy, and capitalism, its *raison d'être*, were a naturally occurring phenomena, there would be no need for indoctrination.

Mills picks up his discussion of mixing military and politics again in his analysis of the observations on the centralization of violence, physically represented by the Pentagon. In addition, "As the United States became a great world power, the military establishment has expanded, and members of its higher echelons have moved directly into diplomatic and political circles." (202). This is evidenced by a former General-turned-C.I.A. director (Petraeus), and a former C.I.A. Director-turned-Vice President, and later, President (Bush Sr.). The military and political merge with the corporate under the shared interest of the economy, once again using patriarchal violence as a means of justifying expansion and resource retention. It is where these three points coincide, he says, that "the shape and meaning of the power elite today can be understood." (276).

How is it that the power elite are not challenged on this? Through the manipulation of public opinion into thinking these actions are necessary for the well-being of the nation. The most common and widest-reaching method of choice for this since the advent of mass communication is the media. Public opinion and discussion is a key ingredient in the perpetuation of democracy, because it promotes community and critical free-thinking. The power elite know that the best method of getting people to be less likely to engage in this kind of discussion is to make them believe that in order to keep their lives, incomes, and 'freedom', they must defeat a perceived threat 'by any means necessary.' In order for the power elite to maintain the status quo, "the public of public opinion has become the object of intensive efforts to control, manage, manipulate, and increasingly intimidate." (310). He points out that what we know comes from the media, we do not see the events firsthand (311), allowing for the media to be fed whatever narrative those in charge want to be passed, without any real accountability. The process of and material used by elites to spread this misinformation and control the narrative has been termed 'propaganda', and has been studied by journalists and academics such as David Halberstam (1979), and Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman (2002).

Halberstam's 1979 work *The Powers that Be* chronicles the development and use of media control by the elites. By then, "the government was becoming increasingly sensitive to the power of broadcasting, and this sensitivity was matched by a parallel awareness within the networks of just how many ways the government had to lean on the networks." (197). In fact, by John Kennedy Jr.'s presidency, "Everyone was using everyone. The media using the President, the president using the media." (444). As the development of the half hour news show began to report on and influence political campaigns (569), the government began to use television as a medium of creating support for going to war (711). The use of 'embedded journalists' among

troops in war zones such as Vietnam were meant to report on events in a way that showed the United States in a positive light, as bringers of democracy and fighters of tyranny (the ultimate irony); with the intention of garnering continued support for the conflict. This is despite the truth, which is known to be quite the opposite, that the Vietnam conflict, and later the Gulf Wars, was started on a predication perpetuated by the media in order to protect elite interests.

Herman and Chomsky (2002), who outline and provide thorough examples of the propaganda model, state: “the media serve, and propagandize on behalf of, the powerful societal interests that control and finance them.” (xi). Much like the military, corporations, and government have centralized, so has the media. They found: “Since 1990, a wave of massive deals and rapid globalization have left the media industries further centralized in nine transnational conglomerates.” (xiii). The authors go on to describe how the propaganda creates and pushes its narrative, from who are considered ‘worthy’ versus ‘unworthy’ victims (37), election and military invasion frameworks, and how facts are selected to meet the dominant elitist narrative (143). They also demonstrate the overlap of the military and the media, pointing out that weapons manufacturing companies owning media stations such as G.E. owning NBC (12). The “networks also all require government licenses and franchises and are thus potentially subject to control or harassment.” (13). This is a conflict of interest at its most basic level, and yet another example of extreme overlap.

Chomsky picks up the propaganda discussion in *Media Control* (2002). He discusses the Red Scare, which he writes, “succeeded pretty much in destroying unions and eliminating such dangerous problems as freedom of the press and freedom of political thought.” (12). Unions, at the time, were the only credible threat to the labor interests of the power elite, until their passage of laws undermined them to a point of extreme weakness. He describes the manufacturing of consent as a theory which “asserts that only a small elite, the intellectual community...can understand the common interests, what all of us care about, and that these things ‘elude the general public’” (15). Later on, he makes it clear: “The media are a corporate monopoly. They have the same point of view. The two parties are two factions of the business party.” (29).

Mills’ contemporary, William Domhoff, gives an updated account of how the power elite work together to keep power. Going not into just the corporate networks but the elites’ development of a ‘social upper class’ as well, he updates and expands Mills’ work, also including the recent advent of agribusiness as another circle in the interstices of corporate hierarchy. In a truly frightening revelation, he also talks about Lockheed Martin, a weapons manufacturer, with Monsanto, an agribusiness; and Boeing (another defense company)’s ties with Abbott Labs, another agribusiness (27). The heavy hitters of these companies serve on each others’ corporate boards of directors, and wine, dine, and vacation together. In addition to food, Monsanto is also known for its toxic chemicals that it uses in the name of crop protection, but have actually been proven to kill much need insect life vital to the pollination and reproduction process necessary to ensure the spread of the crop. They are also known for their seeds containing a terminator gene, or a mutation that makes the seed die after one cycle, essentially forcing the farmer to buy new seeds from them year after year.

Another way the corporate community comes together is in the stock industry. Domhoff’s ongoing research shows that: “(1) members of the upper class own a large share of the privately held corporate stock; (2) many superwealthy stockholding families in the upper class continue to be involved in the direction of major corporations through family offices,

various types of investment partnerships, and holding companies...” (42). Mills wrote that the point of view of status bases itself on family descent (50), so it would stand to reason that corporations and even governments would be run by families, both of which have been witnessed in modern society with the Bush dynasty (and possibly the Clinton one, depending on the outcome of the current election cycle), and with the passing down of family business from (usually) fathers to sons, in true patriarchal fashion.

Domhoff also discusses the convergence of economic interests and social cohesion in policy consensus (74). He outlines how the power elite fund think tanks that essentially spit out the desired research results their funders want. He describes the policy process as beginning “in corporate boardrooms, social clubs and informal discussions, where problems are identified as ‘issues’ to be solved by new policies. It ends in government, where policies are enacted and implemented.” (76). If this is the case, then American democracy is truly a sham, and there is no point in following its hollow rules. Domhoff’s research shows that this is most likely the case in his analysis of gerrymandering and voter suppression (134). The use of redistricting along with disenfranchisement and a forced two-party system ensures that the voting numbers are more balanced in their favor. This culminates in what Domhoff calls a “class-domination theory of power” that is based in the distributive power of the dominant class to use its “structural power” to maintain its order (192). In other words, they use their resources and influence to maintain the status quo because they can. They will employ every tool in their arsenal in the face of dissenting public opinion, including using the government’s capability to spy on its citizens (131), as well as its foundational go-to, violence.

“The indiscriminate and widespread use of force against the civilian population has been called genocidal” (56), writes Hank Johnston (2012). In his analysis of State response to opposition from its citizens, he writes of a mobilization-repression nexus. It is essentially a cost/benefit analysis the powers that be use to decide when to take action (57). In what he calls a “hierarchy of oppressive administration” (57), elites use a combination of violence and surveillance to maintain social control on a worldwide scale. He outlines seven aspects of a “high-capacity authoritarian regimes (HCAs)” (60), including *Centralization of governance*, *Media control*, *Highly developed social control apparatus*, *Absence of citizen protections*, and *Clientalism* (60-61). The clientalism is evidenced in the aforementioned descriptions of elite social networks and pooling of resources both economic and socially to create their own class for both; and how the perpetuation of the public image has been discussed as well. The methods of social control will be discussed later on. Now, let’s take a look at examples of the absence of citizen protections.

Surveillance and Confinement: Big Brother is Watching

In their article on sousveillance (watching from below) and direct action/protest against surveillance, Elizabeth Bradshaw (2013) analyzes how surveillance works in coordination with law enforcement to quell dissent and maintain the status quo in the face of social justice movements. Both she and Greenwald (2014) discuss the real life actuality of Bentham’s panopticon and Foucault’s ideas on disciplinary surveillance. Both are meant to “encourage self-monitoring” (451). Bradshaw also notes the recent research on participatory, or “‘lateral surveillance’ where ordinary citizens monitor each other” (451). This encouraged ‘inclusion’ of the public to say something if they see something normalizes the loss of privacy and the government gaze under the guise of a “transparent society.”

In her description of various methods used by activists to use the law enforcement's surveillance methods against them, Bradshaw outlines how the government's response increased in severity when attempting to thwart protest efforts. Noting "the potential for these devices to incite true revolutionary change when they remain under the control of state and corporate authorities" (459), she describes police monitoring of social media outlets used by activists to plan actions (456), including the cooperation of Twitter by shutting down the lines of communication used on its feed. There are also several instances of authorities grabbing and smashing cameras and phones in an effort to destroy footage that would hold them accountable for their actions (457), as well as arrests of journalists for recording these events (458).

The extent to which all Americans, not just activists, are being watched has been made frighteningly clear with the recent revelations of Edward Snowden, a privacy advocate and surveillance whistleblower. The documents he shares and their implications for the American (and also world) citizenry are outlined by Glenn Greenwald in his aforementioned 2014 work. What Snowden gave Greenwald reinforced all the speeches he has given "about how surveillance changes human behavior, highlighting studies showing that people who know they are being watched are more confined, more cautious about what they say, less free" (38). The documents showed how the National Security Administration (NSA) lied to Congress about its activities regarding the mass spying on citizens, and ordered phone and social media companies to turn over communication records. Snowden also confirms "the US government has the capability to remotely activate cell phones and covert them into listening devices" (37). It is essentially gathered that the purpose of the NSA is to wantonly spy on everyone in the world, even its own people and supposed 'allies', in order to maintain social control. Greenwald's publication of the leaked documents reinforces the ongoing theme that "Governments around the world have made vigorous attempts to train citizens to disdain their own privacy (170)..." "Mass surveillance by the state is therefore inherently oppressive (174)."

Greenwald discusses Occupy Wall Street in his example of where surveillance meets state violence. In an effort to "fortify their control...The response to the Occupy movement was to crush it with force...The para-militarization of domestic police forces was on full display in American cities..." (176). The Occupiers learned that "Merely organizing movements of dissent becomes difficult when the government is watching everything people are doing" (177). Greenwald writes of the state's recognition of the power of internalized watching that mass surveillance brings. Echoing Foucault's research, he states: "every oppressive state views mass surveillance as one of its most critical instruments of control" (176). Foucault wrote of this in his development of theories of confinement, something the elites use when other methods fail. Some people, as Snowden demonstrates, are not willing to give up on ideas or freedom. As a result of his stand for transparency, he is currently wanted by the American government for charges under its Espionage Act. Snowden is forced to live in exile for his heroic deed, another form of confinement.

Before writing of this in *Discipline and Punish* (1977), Foucault chronicled the rise of the use of confinement as a means of social control in *Madness and Civilization* (1965). He writes of the importance of social exclusion as a form of social control for both the individual being explicitly controlled, as well as the rest of society in the form of a warning (6-7). Discussing the rise of 'mad houses' as one of the most early forms of confinement for the socially undesirable, he believed that madness was the truth of the absurd, that those who were considered mad were

those who saw through the societal construct of it all. He stated: “madness is the punishment of a disorderly and useless science. If madness is the truth of knowledge, it is because knowledge is absurd” (25). The powers that be forced mad houses in every jurisdiction by the seventeenth century (44), and hospitals, prisons and jails later became the chief centers of confinement (45). The use of confinement also eliminated other socially undesirable effects of capitalism, such as unemployment (54), masking poverty and suppressing a population (232).

Foucault develops his analysis of the social function and consequences of punishment in *Discipline and Punish*. He believed the privatization of punishment created a “double system of protection that justice has set up between itself and the punishment it imposes” (10). It uses secrecy shrouded in complex law to preserve its set up, and those who are allowed to commit crime have the privilege of being “really great” (69), making the application of law “inconsistent” (78). He details the parallel of the rise in laws creating crime and punishment with the rising desire of the bourgeoisie to protect their property rights (84), also leading to the formation of early law enforcement (85). Once confined, individuals are subject to around-the-clock surveillance, internalizing the gaze and normalizing the idea that this is necessary. As Foucault’s and others’ research shows, detention does nothing but cause recidivism (265), due largely to “The conditions to which the free inmates are subjected” (267), including housing and employment discrimination.

Inmates are perhaps one of the most isolated groups from society. Becky Pettit (2012) writes: “Inmates are a social group isolated socially, physically, and statistically from much of society” (2). She echoes Foucault’s assertions of control through surveillance (43) and incarcerations as a means of disguising negative social effects of policy (47). She writes how this creates the illusion of a “natural incarceration rate” (10), normalizing confinement. She observes that “race and class inequality in incarceration is at historic highs” (11), and draws parallels in the current legal system to post slavery Jim Crow laws (14), something Michelle Alexander discusses in great detail in her 2012 work, *The New Jim Crow*.

Observing that: “Today it is perfectly legal to discriminate in nearly all the ways that it was once legal to discriminate against African Americans” (2), and “the American penal system has emerged as a system of social control unparalleled in world history” (8). Alexander discusses the recent imperialist concept of racism and its relation to the rise in incarceration rates. Both she and Pettit note that a majority of inmates are People of Color, essentially reclassifying slavery by another name. The elites’ bribing of the white poor into the gradual delusion that they had more in common than the poor whites did with the black slaves and allowing the poor white to police slaves drove an eventual wedge between them, solidifying race as a hierarchical social construct (25). This history is important in recognizing the pattern being perpetuated in the so-called justice system today. Alexander credits the invention of the War on Drugs and its acceptance by white voters as the tipping point for the system to find legal loopholes for incarcerating anyone it saw as undesirable (54). The reason for this is: “Convictions for drug offenses are the single most cause of the explosion of incarceration rates in the United States” (60). Alexander’s research shows that these drug laws disproportionately affect poor communities; particularly communities of color, which are more likely to be heavily policed and the people subject to “stop-and-frisk” laws (70). Police are also most likely to raid houses in “the ‘hood” (124). She finds that: “Racial bias is most acute at the point of entry into the system for two reasons: discretion and authorization” (123). These also happen to be the two areas with the least amount

of transparency, accountability, or oversight. Once one is released from incarceration, Foucault's "conditions to which the free inmates are subjected" become a reality. The inability to have rights such as voting, and basic necessities such as food assistance and shelter denied because of 'felon status' because of a drug charge and the inability to get employment to change the situation all but guarantees a return trip (94). This perpetuates the idea of the African American 'second-class citizen' by using the law as justification for denying one their freedom.

The idea of racism still being used as a tool of the elites to reinforce power is something that some find difficult, considering the current President is African American, for the first time in history. Truth is, Alexander, Pettit, and Delgado and Stefanic (2012) all cite Obama's election as a figurehead for the myth of a post-racial society. Genova (2015) details this use as a reinforcement of American exceptionalism and imperialism, using it to create a Global Security State, it creates "new formations of 'race' at the distinct intersection of American exceptionalism and an imperial multiculturalism enacted and embodied through the Obama presidency" (616). Obama has used this ideal in his use of "preventative detention" (619) and to perpetuate a worldwide security state in a sort of "anti-colonial imperialism" (620).

Obama's election was also used by John McCain, who "deployed the Obama election to silence any further expression of racial complaint or grievance and to suppress anew any specifically racial objection to the claim that this is, indeed, 'the greatest nation on Earth'" (624). This is done in the grand scheme to minimize "the white supremacy that has shaped the United States" (624), perpetuating it as an "anomaly." Genova calls the United States "the ultimate simulacrum of global inclusiveness" (625) with the neoliberalist privatization of race (626). As Alexander's and Pettit's research and statistics show, the elites can try to hide it, but racism and internalization of norms are still primary tactics used to keep power.

That's the Way We've Always Done It: Socialization and Internalization of Oppression

As the perpetuation of racism showed itself to be recast rather than eradicated, a group of legal scholars came together to challenge the construct. The result is Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw et. al., 1995), which "challenges the ways in which race and racial power are constructed and represented in American legal culture, and more generally, in American society as a whole" (xiii). It also stems from "...a deep dissatisfaction with traditional civil rights discourse" (xiv). Like Genova, the authors note a need for colorblind policies in government in order to neutralize their perceived threat of civil rights (103). Being written by legal scholars, the work shows the extent to which even the Constitution is not color blind. It is something that is not often discussed, as "explicit race-consciousness has been considered taboo for at least fifteen years in mainstream American politics" (127).

The work of Delgado and Stefanic of the same name examines the implications of this in a cultural perspective. While describing the formation of the theory much the same way as the more legal oriented work does, this 2012 work explains what it means in everyday life. It also critically examines the civil rights movements, asserting: "civil rights gains for communities of color coincide with the dictates of white self-interest. Little happens out of altruism alone" (22), implying that the power elite still have control, that they are only giving the illusion of freedom because it suits them to do so. The power elite, being white and creating the stage, have thereby commodified race, creating a system of privileges based on this construct. Both editions of *Critical Race Theory* discuss white privilege, whiteness as property, and 'passing' as white

(1995, 276) (2012, 83). The 2012 edition describes the process of the normalization of whiteness, how “everything is defined in relation or opposition to whiteness” (84), and how “The legal definition of whiteness” (85) affects even immigration law. Whiteness is “shifting and malleable” (87), and comes with privileges, or benefits as a result.

The subject of white privilege is further analyzed in a work of the same name (ed. Rothenberg, 2008). Iterating that whiteness is “placed as the norm, the ordinary, the standard” (Dyer in Rothenberg, 11), it takes a critical look at the construct from the perspective of privilege. “For those in power in the West, as long as whiteness is felt to be the human condition, then it alone both defines normality and fully inhabits it” (12). As long as white people do not recognize their privilege, they will continue to believe that they “think, feel, act like and for all people” (12). In fact, “race itself would be meaningless if it were not a fault line along which power, prestige, and respect are distributed” (Dalton in Rothenberg, 16). hooks, who also has an article in this work, states: “Systems of domination, imperialism, colonialism, and racism actively coerce black folks to internalize negative perceptions of blackness, to be self-hating” (19). Race theory was used “to explain and justify the expansion and colonizing by white peoples...and the continuing domination of nonwhite peoples” (30). There was a “move from racial classification to racialization” (31) as property became an increasing priority to the powers that be. This prioritization has been pointed out elsewhere in this writing as the source of capitalism, patriarchy, and thus, the division of labor and race in the interest of the power elite.

Peggy McIntosh’s seminal article on white privilege is included in *White Privilege*. In her analysis of privilege and its inner workings, she notes: “I think whites are carefully taught not to recognize white privilege, as males are taught not to recognize male privilege” (123). Due to the subtle and insidious nature of indoctrination of privilege over time, “much of [their] oppressiveness was unconscious” (124). Her infamous checklist of the privileges white people experience purely by virtue of their skin follows this assertion. Her research led to the observation that: “Whiteness protected me from many kinds of hostility, distress, and violence, which I was being subtly trained to visit in turn upon people of color...Such privilege simply *confers dominance* because of one’s race or sex” (126). IN regards to her privilege checklist, she gravely opines: “If these things are true, this is not such a free country, one’s life is not what one makes it; many doors open for certain people for no virtues of their own” (125).

An example of this is Douthat’s firsthand account of his Harvard experience in *Privilege: Harvard and the Education of the Ruling Class* (2005). Writing “that Harvard is a terrible mess of a place—an incubator for an American ruling class that is smug, stratified, self-congratulatory, and intellectually adrift” (4). His experience was quite contrary to what he expected during his undergraduate career there, stating “what Harvard taught me was not what I thought I had gone there to learn” (8). Observing the behavior of his classmates and professors on campus in regards to grading, socializing, and the illusion of campus diversity and affirmative action (21), Douthat learned a firsthand lesson in white privilege. He also tells of the illusion of housing randomization in the name of diversity, which actually reinforced segregation of students on campus (23), and professors caving under pressure to inflate students’ grades in order to keep their jobs (113). He describes the power and allure of this privilege and the effect it has on perpetuating the ruling class. The last thing anyone wants, he says, is to be “expelled from the paradise of the American overclass” (107).

Foucault, in his *History of Sexuality, Vol. 1* (1978), tells of the pathologization of sex and sexuality of the eighteenth century that was used to “justify the racisms of the state, which at the time were on the horizon. It grounded them in ‘truth.’” (54). He notes that this repression of sexuality “has indeed been the fundamental link between power, knowledge, and sexuality since the classical age...after...one adjusts it to coincide with the development of capitalism: it becomes an integral part of the bourgeois order” (5). By transforming “the sexual conduct of couples into a concerted economic and political behavior,” (26), sexuality becomes constituted through law (113), and reproducing bodies become “legitimate couples...tended to function as a norm” (38) of social control. The motivations behind this are: “to ensure population, to reproduce labor capacity, to perpetuate the form of social relations: in short, to constitute a sexuality that is economically useful and politically conservative” (36-37). The pathologization it has created is under the guise of morality. As a result of this process, “sex, the revelation of truth, the overturning of global laws...are linked together” (7).

All of these methods are used to reinforce social order and reinforce the “perceptions of the ruled,” Gibson writes (2014, 283). Since this “social order is premised on a lie or secret” (283), what he terms a sociology of deception (283), or the elaborate system used to uphold the construct, are “inherently fragile” (284). Using Madoff’s ponzi scheme and the unwillingness of those who had an inkling of what was going on but didn’t say anything as his example, Gibson analyzes the “self-deception” that occurs “on a mass scale” (293) and the interdisciplinary factors that contribute to the sociology and secrecy of deception (294). He ties this blindness or unwillingness to several “barriers to leakage” (300), including barriers to knowing, asking, telling, perceiving, believing, and acting. By using concepts as plausible deniability, not asking the ‘right’ questions or ignoring red flags, immoral and illegal behavior is perpetuated in order to maintain the status quo. By allowing ourselves to see what we want to see, our minds are shut out to the possibility, and as a result, we are not morally obligated to act on any wrongdoing. As Gibson notes, “it is one thing to know the truth and something else to act on it” (299).

Conclusion

So, what can be taken from all of this? The short answer is that the patriarchy is a cleverly and insidiously constructed house of cards held carefully together by the few who control the resources. Mills stated: “All politics is a struggle for power; the ultimate kind of power is violence.” (171). This constant violence, as the research has shown, is not in fact normal or healthy, nor our natural inclination as human individuals. Foucault observed that this type of power practice takes time and infinite patience (158). Human’s natural inclination is toward freedom, and the power elites know this. Every time there is an uprising or mass expression of protest or true democracy, it is shut down immediately. As bell hooks says, “...while humans may have needed to create external power to keep the species alive at one time, this is no longer the case...the pursuit of external power only leads to violence and destruction. It is an evolutionary modality that no longer works.” (116). As was observed in the companion paper to this piece: “The simultaneous organization and malleability of anarchism is part of what makes it theoretically and historically successful when left uninterrupted or co-opted by the State, as evidenced by the success of Occupy getting its needs met autonomously, as well as the Zapatistas in Oaxaca.”⁵ The paper also discusses the media blackout and increase in police brutality during Occupy, two tactics of the power elite described in this piece. Occupy Wall Street was a manifestation of the grievances of a nation that was tired of being the target of this

manipulative construct, and as their slogan goes, the 99% greatly outweigh the 1%. With all the fear-based law and networks created to protect their fragile regime, it can be hard to know where to begin to break through. For those who have been subject to this oppression for most or all of their lives, it can be difficult to manifest a desire to challenge the construct. To both of these, some insight can be offered.

Johnston's analysis of the mobilization-repression nexus also analyzes the weaknesses in its framework. In analyzing the elite methods "both hierarchically at different levels and laterally...where elite interests frequently diverge...Intersections and gaps on both axes can create lapse in social control and openings for the opposition." (57). Relying on the "wellsprings of freedom and creativity that sometimes exist in modern authoritarian states" (57), the second half of his article analyzes how the HCA framework can be manipulated, and offers thirteen propositions to combat the framework. As any true change begins, those on the lowest level are the most susceptible. He writes: "At lower levels, the majority of the police and security forces are made up of common workers, who, in the weak and uneven economies of these authoritarian regimes, are happy to have a regular job...As division appears within the ranks of the police and security forces, on-the-ground tactical assessments of advantage often appear to favor the protestors by virtue of their sheer numbers. When this occurs, regime change is not far behind." (71). In short, the people, when united, can never be defeated. This is the short work; the long work is in the uniting.

Consensus in research shows a need for a race-based solution. Alexander writes, "The prevailing caste system cannot be dismantled with a purely race-neutral approach" (239)...Furthermore, if meaningful progress is to be made, whites must give up their racial bribes, too, and be willing to sacrifice their racial privilege (257)." This belief is echoed in Rothenberg's work, stating: "the challenge for those of us who are white is to find ways that use privilege to combat racism and the system of privilege as a whole" (5). A belief held by some Critical Race theorists holds that "minorities of color should not try to fit into a flawed economic and political system but transform it" (68). Breaking "the silence is a survival issue" (Tatum in Rothenberg, 150), and "Whites must exert a special effort to become deeply aware of their own and others' racism" (Feagin & Vera in Rothenberg, 154). *Critical Race Theory* (1995) states: "Exposing the centrality of race-consciousness is crucial to identifying and delegitimizing beliefs that present hierarchy as inevitable and fair" (112). As hooks, Foucault, and Crenshaw note, patriarchal violence is also gendered. If the power elite are using an intersectional approach to their patriarchy, we, in turn, must use an intersectional feminist approach to truly have a chance at changing things.

hooks writes: "Only a revolution of values in our nation will end male violence, and that revolution will necessarily be based on a love ethic" (11). This is our first line of resistance against the "tyranny of the unfamiliar" (15). In addition: "Feminism as a movement to end sexist domination and oppression offers us all the way out of patriarchal culture" (122). It is necessary to "highlight the role women play in perpetuating and sustaining patriarchal culture...Dismantling and changing patriarchal culture is work that men and women must do together" (24).

It is important to recognize that this feminism must be intersectional. The 1995 edition of *Critical Race Theory* contains Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw's groundbreaking article on the topic. When oppressions are gendered and racialized, it is important to be aware of how the

“intersection of racism and sexism factors into black women’s lives in ways that cannot be captured wholly by looking separately at the race or gender dimensions of those experiences” (358). Crenshaw goes on to explain how these and other matrices of oppression, such as class and language barriers affect one’s daily interactions and shape their life experience through a lens of simultaneous privileges and oppressions. It is the key to understanding and undoing the full effect of the indoctrination of a patriarchal society.

This, of course, will not be easy. hooks notes: “One of the ways patriarchal white males used mass media to wage the war against feminism was to consistently portray the violent woman-hating man as aberrant and normal” (130). Ideally, by having pointed out the methods in which this is falsely constructed and perpetuated, it will now be easier going forward for those who desire so to be able to challenge the system in a permanent and equitable way. It is the only way to undo the decades of social control and internalization of subjugation that has occurred on a massive scale. Those who see through the construct must act now to dismantle it while building up others and showing them how to do so as well. The future of humanity depends on it.

Notes:

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2. *Ibid.*, 3.
3. *Ibid.*, 19.
4. *Ibid.*, 21-22.
5. *Ibid.*, 8.

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